

Additional references

- Leis, J.M. & Trnski, T. 1989. *The larvae of Indo-Pacific shorefishes*. 371 pp. New South Wales University Press, Sydney.
- Paxton, J.R., Hoese, D.F., Allen, G.R. & Hanley, J.E. 1989. *Zoological catalogue of Australia*, part 7 (Pisces Petromyzontidae to Carangidae). 665 pp. Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra.
- Randall, J.E., Allen, G.R. & Steene, R.C. 1990. *Fishes of the Great Barrier Reef and Coral Sea*. 507 pp. Crawford House Press, Bathurst.

Comments on the proposed conservation of *Acanthopthalmus* van Hasselt in Temminck, 1824 (Osteichthyes, Cypriniformes) with *Cobitis kuhlii* Valenciennes in Cuvier & Valenciennes, 1846 as the type species
(Case 2738; see BZN 47: 118–121; 48: 59–65)

(1) Rohan Pethiyagoda

The Wildlife Heritage Trust of Sri Lanka, 36/2 Castle Street, Colombo 8, Sri Lanka

I have read the observations of Ng, Munro & Lim and Kottelat (BZN 48: 59–62) on the application by BurrIDGE, Siebert & Ferraris. I have also read the arguments of Siebert and of Hieronimus, Schmidt & Steinle (BZN 48: 63–64). While being in complete agreement with the views expressed by Kottelat and Ng et al. I wish to draw the attention of the Commission to some broader issues which I feel it should take into consideration in deciding this case.

1. After many decades of neglect the fishes of South and Southeast Asia are now again receiving the attention of ichthyologists. The most recent technical literature on much of the oriental ichthyofauna is more than a century old. Many areas of this geographically and politically complex region are, or until recently have been, difficult to access and work in. However, during the past decade a few workers have been successful in penetrating some of the more remote areas and making useful studies; M. Kottelat and T.R. Roberts are notable in this respect. It is evident from the publications of Kottelat (1989, 1990) and Roberts (1989) that the information available in the literature on the fishes of this region up to now has been far from accurate and certainly not complete. A great deal of revisionary work is required, and much work is already in progress. These revisions have resulted, and will continue to result, in many fundamental changes to the nomenclature. I have shown (Pethiyagoda, 1991) that of the primary freshwater fishes of Sri Lanka the names of some 30% of the taxa have changed from the most recent revision (1955). The replacement of *Acanthopthalmus* van Hasselt in Temminck, 1824 by *Pangio* Blyth, 1860 has not caused 'considerable confusion' as alleged by BurrIDGE et al. and is unlikely to do so in any way. If this were the case any taxonomic revision would be futile. I cannot conceive of any competent taxonomist being confused by the recommendation of Kottelat (1987); not even the chaotic alpha-level taxonomy of the minor Asiatic cyprinids seems to have caused 'considerable confusion'.

2. Contrary to the view adopted by BurrIDGE et al. many of the more responsible catalogues and guides do take particular pride in ensuring that they adopt the most up-to-date nomenclature. As Ng et al. have pointed out, changes in the generic placement of commonly exploited fishes such as *Poecilia reticulata* and *Sarotherodon mossambicus*

have been widely accepted by the popular literature, including that concerning the fishery. It is noteworthy that the synonymy of *Oncorhynchus mykiss* with *Salmo gairdneri* was reported (Gall & Groot, 1990; see BZN 48: 59) in a fisheries-related journal and not one associated with systematics. Siebert's contention that these examples are irrelevant is not justified; while they are not quoted by way of precedents, they serve to demonstrate that the scientific community is well fitted to the absorption of nomenclatural revision, rather than being confused by it. Even Schmidt & Steinle appear to have experienced only a belated change of heart, having followed Kottelat in using *Pangio* in 1989 (see BZN 48: 64); were they not as 'confused' by this 'discontinuity' in 1989 as they appear to be now in 1991?

3. In the event of the petition by BurrIDGE et al. being upheld, those workers presently involved in systematic research of the Oriental ichthyofauna would be compelled to submit many of their recommendations, even when consistent with the provisions of the Code, to the Commission as a matter of routine, thus delaying significantly the publication of their results.

4. Even if BurrIDGE et al. have established a prima facie case in terms of Article 79c(1) and (2) (and this is not clear from their petition), their arguments do not reach beyond the minimum requirements for a case. While the Commission is not bound by precedent, it is clear that a decision in favour of BurrIDGE et al. would be a retrograde step. If the retention of *Pangio* were to introduce complicating factors such as homonymy or synonymy, use of the plenary powers would certainly be necessary. The indiscriminate invocation of the Commission's plenary powers, on the other hand, could in itself now result in the considerable confusion feared by BurrIDGE et al.

This case is one in which the Principle of Priority may be upheld without causing confusion or instability; the fact that publications following Kottelat (1987) have adopted *Pangio* without adverse comment is evidence of this. In place of the proposals on BZN 47: 120, the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is asked:

- (1) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology the name *Acanthopthalmus* van Hasselt in Temminck, 1824 (a junior objective synonym of *Cobitis* Linnaeus, 1758).

Additional reference

Pethiyagoda, R. 1991. *Freshwater fishes of Sri Lanka*. xiv, 362 pp. Wildlife Heritage Trust, Colombo.

- (2) Rainer Stawikowski
Siegfriedstrasse 14, 4650 Gelsenkirchen, Germany

I fully agree with Ng, Munro & Lim (BZN 48: 60) who expect that aquarists 'should be able to cope with nomenclatural changes', if they 'are really interested in learning the scientific names of their fish'. In fact, they *are* able to do so. My experience as editor of a leading aquarium magazine (*DATZ, Die Aquarien- und Terrarien-Zeitschrift*), with a circulation of over 40,000 copies monthly, demonstrates this. Since we have adopted the completely-changed name for the rainbow trout, *Oncorhynchus mykiss* (Walbaum, 1792), to cite one example among others, there have been neither problems nor confusion.